

## Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

RSC-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 SAM-01 SAJ-01 /031 W

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R 060701Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7818

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: ISHIHARA TO CHALLENGE MINOBE IN TOKYO GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION

SUMMARY: LDP HAS APPARENTLY SETTLED ON AUTHOR TURNED POLITICIAN SHINTARO ISHIHARA AS CHALLENGER TO REFORMIST INCUMBENT RYOKICHI MINOBE IN APRIL TOKYO GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION. WHILE MINOBE IS FAVORED TO WIN RE-ELECTION, ISHIHARA, WHO IS YOUNG, COLORFUL AND PROVEN VOTE-GETTER, COULD CONCEIVABLY PULL OFF UPSET. GIVEN SYMBOLIC VALUE OF WRESTING CONTROL OF NATION'S CAPITAL FROM REFORMIST HANDS, LDP SEEMS LIKELY TO GIVE ISHIHARA ALL-OUT CAMPAIGN SUPPORT. END SUMMARY.

1. ON FEBRUARY 3, PRIME MINISTER MIKI AND OTHER TOP LDP LEADERS DECIDED TO BACK SHINTARO ISHIHARA (42) AS CANDIDATE IN APRIL TOKYO GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION, ISHIHARA HAS NOT YET AGREED TO PARTY PROPOSAL, BUT KNOWLEDGABLE OBSERVERS ARE CONVINCED THAT HE WILL ANNOUNCE DECISION TO RUN ABOUT FEBURARY 10. IN MEANTIME, HE WILL EXTRACT MAXIMUM PUBLICITY FROM ACTIVE PRESS INTEREST IN HIS PROSPECTIVE CANDIDACY.

2. SELECTION OF ISHIHARA ENDS LONG LDP SEARCH FOR CANDIDATE WITH SUFFICIENT PUBLIC APPEAL TO HAVE HALFWAY REASONABLE

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CHANCE AGAINST FIRMLY ENTRENCHED REFORMIST GOVERNOR RYOKICHI

MINOBE, WHO IS SEEKING THIRD TERM. PARTY HAS CONSIDERED MANY POSSIBLE CONTENDERS IN LAST TWO YEARS, BUT THEY EITHER LACKED SUFFICIENT STATURE OR WERE UNWILLING TO BECOME INVOLVED IN WHAT SEEMED CERTAIN TO BE LOSING ENTERPRISE. ISHIHARA HAS HIMSELF DECLINED TWO PREVIOUS OFFERS TO CHALLENGER MINOBE.

3. WRITER-TURN POLITICIAN, ISHIHARA HAS VIGOR, FLAIR AND DEMONSTRATED VOTE-GETTING ABILITY. IN 1968 UPPER HOUSE ELECTION HE TOPPED NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY FIELD WITH 3 MILLION VOTES. IN 1972 LOWER HOUSE CONTEST HE WON IN TOKYO 2ND DISTRICT WITH RECORD-SETTING 119,000. WHILE DETAILS HAVE YET TO BE WORKED OUT, ISHIHARA CAN COUNT ON AMPLE CAMPAIGN FINANCING AND IS EXPECTED TO WAGE HARD-FOUGHT CAMPAIGN FEATURING SHARP ATTACKS ON MINOBE AS "DO NOTHING GOVERNOR". HE WILL PROBABLY ALSO EMPLOY APPEARANCES BY HIS ACTOR-BROTHER, POPULAR SINGERS AND OTHER "PERSONALITIES" IN EFFORT TO ATTRACT YOUNG PEOPLE AND FLOATING VOTE. HIS LONG-STANDING OPPOSITION TO FORMER PRIME MINISTER TANAKA MIGHT ALSO HELP HIM HERE.

4. DESPITE ISHIHARA ASSETS, NO ONE IS PREDICTING THAT HE WILL UNSEAT MINOBE. FOR ONE THING, MINOBE, DESPITE SOME DISCONTENT OVER HIS FAILURE TO DELIVER ON PROMISED SOCIAL WELFARE MEASURES, IS STILL POPULAR WITH TOKYOITES AND SKILLFULLY EXPLOITS IMAGE AS KIND OF BENEVOLENT FATHER (OR GRANDFATHER) FIGURE. FOR ANOTHER, LDP IS NOT VERY POPULAR IN TOKYO. IN 1972 LOWER HOUSE ELECTION, CONSERVATIVES GOT ONLY 30 PERCENT OF VOTE WHILE JSP, KOMEITO AND JCP (ALL PAST MINOBE BACKERS) OBTAINED AGGREGATE 56 PERCENT. (DSP RECEIVED ABOUT 10 PERCENT). IN LAST JULY'S UPPER HOUSE CONTEST, LDP LOCAL CONSTITUENCY CANDIDATES MUSTERED ONLY 24 PERCENT OF TOTAL (ALTHOUGH "TALENT" CANDIDATES PULLED TOTAL UP TO 40 PERCENT IN NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY). ONE MORE FACTOR WORKING AGAINST ISHIHARA IS HIS SEIRANKAI MEMBERSHIP. MINOBE BACKERS WILL NO DOUBT PLAY UP SEIRANKAI AFFILIATION AS EVIDENCE OF ISHIHARA'S FAR-RIGHT, ULTRA-NATIONALIST ORIENTATION, PLOY LIKELY TO HAVE SOME IMPACT IN "PROGRESSIVE" URBAN SETTING.

5. PARTY LINE-UP FOR TOKYO GUBERNATORIAL RACE IS STILL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NOT FIRM. SO FAR MINOBE HAS SUPPORT OF JSP AND KOMEITO, WHILE JCP AND DSP COMMITMENTS ARE STILL QUESTION MARKS. MANY KOMEITO BACKERS ARE CONSERVATIVE IN OUTLOOK AND CONSIDERING RESULTS OF OTHER COOPERATIVE ELECTION EFFORTS, CHANCES OF KOMEITO VOTE SPLIT SEEM STRONG. ONE REPORTER TELLS US, HOWEVER, THAT PRESIDENT DAISAKU IKEDA HAS PROMISED MINOBE SOLID SOKA GAKKAI SUPPORT WHICH COULD REDUCE DEFECTIONS TO ISHIHARA.

6. JCP, WHICH PREVIOUSLY BACKED MINOBE, HAS NOT YET AGREED TO DO SO IN APRIL ELECTION, OSTENSIBLY BECAUSE OF GOVERNOR'S INADEQUATE HANDLING OF DOWA PROBLEM (ASSIMILATION OF FORMER ETA SOCIAL OUTCASTS). REAL PROBLEM IS BETWEEN JSP AND JCP, EACH OF WHICH BACK RIVAL "OUTCAST" ORGANIZATIONS. THESE ORGANIZATIONS, IN TURN, EACH SEEK PRIMARY ROLE IN REPRESENTING "OUTCAST" PEOPLE AND IN CHANNELING FINANCIAL AID TO THEM FROM TOKYO GOVERNMENT. SO FAR, MINOBE HAS FAVORED JSP-BACKED GROUP. WHETHER OR NOT HE IS WILLING OR ABLE TO MAKE CONCESSIONS ON THIS ISSUE SUFFICIENT TO SATISFY COMMUNISTS, WITHOUT ALIENATING SOCIALISTS, REMAINS TO BE SEEN. MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT SHOULD JCP REMAIN ALOOF IN ELECTION, MINOBE WILL RECEIVE MOST COMMUNIST VOTES ANYWAY AND HIS POSITION WILL NOT BE SERIOUSLY IMPAIRED. HOWEVER, SHOULD JCP RUN ITS OWN CANDIDATE, MAKING IT THREE-MAN RACE, CURRENT GOVERNOR COULD FIND HIMSELF IN VERY CLOSE CONTEST WITH ISHIHARA.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

RSC-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 SAJ-01 SAM-01 /031 W

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R 060701Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7819

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

7. LDP WANTS DSP AND DOMEI SUPPORT FOR ISHIHARA, AND ISHIHARA HIMSELF, SAYING THAT SHOULD HE RUN IT WILL BE AS INDEPENDENT, INDICATED THAT HE WOULD NEED BROADLY-BASED SUPPORT ORGANIZATION WHICH WOULD INCLUDE DSP AND DOMEI. GIVEN DSP'S RECORD OF FREQUENT ELECTORAL ALLIANCES WITH CONSERVATIVES AND GIVEN PARTY'S LATEST DRAFT ACTION PROGRAM ADVOCATING PROGRESSIVE-

CONSERVATIVE COALITION, DSP SEEMS LIKELY TO SIDE WITH ISHIHARA OR, IF IN-HOUSE FIGHT DEVELOPS, TO AT LEAST PERMIT DSP MEMBERS "FREE CHOICE", MORE IMPORTANT THAN DSP ATTITUDE, OF COURSE, IS THAT OF DOMEI SINCE IT IS THAT LABOR ORGANIZATION WHICH PROVIDES DSP WITH WHATEVER MUSCLE IT HAS. CONTACTS TELL US THAT THERE IS LITTLE DOMEI ENTHUSIASM FOR "RIGHT-LEANING" ISHIHARA AND PROSPECTS FOR SUPPORT ARE SHAKY.

8. COMMENT: IT WOULD BE HARD RIGHT NOW TO FIND ANYONE WILLING TO BET AGAINST MINOBE IN APRIL ELECTION. ON OTHER HAND, IN ISHIHARA LDP HAS PROBABLY FOUND BEST AVAILABLE CHALLENGER AND, DEPENDING ON HOW CONTENDING FORCES SORT THEMSELVES OUT IN WEEKS AHEAD, POSSIBILITY OF UPSENT BY LDP MAN CANNOT BE RULED OUT. CONSERVATIVES, IN UNDERDOG ROLE, HAVE EVERYTHING TO GAIN AND LITTLE TO LOSE. IN JAPANESE POLITICAL SCHEME OF THINGS, TOKYO GOVERNORSHIP PER SE IS NOT ALL THAT IMPORTANT, BUT, IN SYMBOLIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TERMS, FACT THAT NATION'S CAPITAL IS CONTROLLED BY REFORMIST CAMP HAS BEEN MAJOR IRRITANT TO CONSERVATIVES. THAT CIRCUMSTANCE ALONE IS ENOUGH TO INSPIRE MAJOR LDP EFFORT NOW THAT IT HAS CANDIDATE WHO, UNLIKE PREDECESSORS, HAS ACTUAL CHANCE OF WINNING. MOREOVER, TOKYO VICTORY WOULD BE REAL COUP FOR LDP WHICH HAS HAD LITTLE SUCCESS IN STOPPING STRING OF LEFTIST ELECTION VICTORIES IN MAJOR URBAN AREAS. REFORMISTS, NATURALLY, ALSO ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO TOKYO CONTEST. TOKYO GUBERNATORIAL RACE, THEREFORE, HAS ALL INGREDIENTS FOR REAL DONNYBROOK.  
HODGSON

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